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Congress of the United States
Joint Economic Committee — Minority

106TH CONGRESS

244 FORD HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-226-4066
FAX 202-225-0505

HOWARD ROSEN
STAFF DIRECTOR

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10:00 am
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Contact: Howard Rosen
(202) 226-4066

**Congressman Stark Calls on High Tech CEOs
to Support Funding for Public Education**

WASHINGTON -- At a hearing before the Joint Economic Committee this morning, Congressman Pete Stark called on the high tech community to support increased funding for all schools and to continue the practice of targeting funds for poorer communities.

Congressman Stark commented, "Although our education system has contributed to helping many talented people become successful entrepreneurs, it has been less successful in helping raise people out of poverty." He noted that poverty is the number one indicator of student academic underachievement. Mr. Stark also said, "Unfortunately, many in the Majority would reduce federal funding for education in poorer communities by allowing states the flexibility to use these funds for other purposes."

Mr. Stark commented, "there is something wrong when some students have access to the newest computers available while students in the next community do not even have basic text books." He called on the high tech community to work with Congress to insure that all students have the all educational materials -- both text books and computers -- they need to learn.

"It has become fashionable to 'bash' our education system." He continued, "A decade ago, when we were concerned that Japan was going to eat our lunch, many people blamed our education system for all our problems. This is the same education system which has produced the likes of Andy Grove, Bill Gates and Carly Fiorina, as well as the thousands of young, bright, talented, and creative kids launching and running high tech start-ups every day. Instead of bashing our education system, we need to make sure it serves all of our students, not just the well-off and the fortunate few."